

In the Claims:

Please cancel Claims 1-3.

Please add new Claims 4 through 39 as follows:

1-3. (Canceled)

4. (New) An electronic educational toy having a housing for teaching the letters of an alphabet, comprising:

a plurality of audio prompts output by a speaker enclosed within the toy housing, a prompt including a question or instruction having at least one correct response, the question or instruction designed to encourage a child to make a cognitive selection of a letter and indicate the cognitive selection of the letter by causing contact with a touch-sensitive surface, the touch-sensitive surface formed on at least a portion of a substantially planar surface of the toy housing;

one or more sensors capable of sensing the location of where the touch-sensitive surface has been contacted;

a contact capable of occurring and being sensed in arbitrary child-defined locations on the touch-sensitive surface, the occurrence of contact on the touch-sensitive surface in response to the question or instruction indicating the cognitive selection by the child of the letter corresponding to the question or instruction;

a processor enclosed within the toy housing capable of: a) executing educational software, b) receiving information from the one or more sensors corresponding to the occurrence of contact by the child on the touch-sensitive surface and, c) using the information from the sensors to determine whether the child's cognitive selection of the letter as indicated by the occurrence of contact by the child on the touch-sensitive surface corresponds to a correct response to the question or instruction;

a first audio feedback response output by the speaker enclosed within the toy housing, the first audio feedback response indicating that the letter selected by the child corresponds to a correct response to the question or instruction; and

a second audio feedback response output by the speaker enclosed within the toy housing, the second audio feedback response indicating that the selection by the child is something other than a correct response to the question or instruction,

the toy housing enclosing the speaker, at least a portion of the one or more sensors and the processor, the housing having a substantially planar surface, at least a portion of which comprises the touch-sensitive surface.

5. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 4, wherein the child causes contact with the touch-sensitive surface by placing an object on the touch-sensitive surface.

6. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 4, wherein the processor generates questions or instructions with different levels of difficulty.

7. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 6, wherein the processor generates more difficult questions depending on the user having provided correct previous answers.

8. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 4, further comprising a second prompt for a correct response to the question or instruction in the event the letter selected by the child does not correspond to a correct response to the question or instruction.

9. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 4, further comprising a plurality of images on the touch-sensitive surface to facilitate the interaction between the educational software and the child, wherein the plurality of images on the touch-sensitive surface can be changed.

10. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 4, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being loaded into the toy by users thereof.

11. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 10, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being loaded via a portable memory capable of being inserted by the user into a portable memory receiving device associated with the toy.

12. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 10, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being downloaded from a remote location over a data transmission medium.

13. (New) An electronic educational toy having a housing for teaching words of a spoken language, comprising:

a plurality of audio prompts output by a speaker enclosed within the toy housing, a prompt including a question or instruction having at least one correct response, the question or instruction designed to encourage a child to make a cognitive selection of a word and indicate the cognitive selection of the word by causing contact with a touch-sensitive surface, the touch-sensitive surface formed on at least a portion of a substantially planar surface of the toy housing;

one or more sensors capable of sensing the location of where the touch-sensitive surface has been contacted;

a contact capable of occurring and being sensed in arbitrary child-defined locations on the touch-sensitive surface, the occurrence of contact on the touch-sensitive surface in response to the question or instruction indicating the cognitive selection by the child of the word corresponding to the question or instruction;

a processor enclosed within the toy housing capable of: a) executing educational software, b) receiving information from the one or more sensors corresponding to the occurrence of contact by the child on the touch-sensitive surface and, c) using the information from the sensors to determine whether the child's cognitive selection of the word as indicated by the occurrence of contact by the child on the touch-sensitive surface corresponds to a correct response to the question or instruction;

a first audio feedback response output by the speaker enclosed within the toy housing, the first audio feedback response indicating that the word selected by the child corresponds to a correct response to the question or instruction; and

a second audio feedback response output by the speaker enclosed within the toy housing, the second audio feedback response indicating that the selection by the child is something other than a correct response to the question or instruction,

the toy housing enclosing the speaker, at least a portion of the one or more sensors and the processor, the housing having a substantially planar surface, at least a portion of which comprises the touch-sensitive surface.

14. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 13, wherein the child causes contact with the touch-sensitive surface by placing an object on the touch-sensitive surface.

15. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 13, wherein the processor generates questions or instructions with different levels of difficulty.

16. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 15, wherein the processor generates more difficult questions depending on the user having provided correct previous answers.

17. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 13, further comprising a second prompt for a correct response to the question or instruction in the event the word selected by the child does not correspond to a correct response to the question or instruction.

18. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 13, further comprising a plurality of images on the touch-sensitive surface to facilitate the interaction between the educational software and the child, wherein the plurality of images on the touch-sensitive surface can be changed.

19. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 13, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being loaded into the toy by users thereof.

20. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 19, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being loaded via a portable memory capable of being inserted by the user into a portable memory receiving device associated with the toy.

21. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 19, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being downloaded from a remote location over a data transmission medium.

22. (New) An electronic educational toy having a housing for teaching numbers, comprising:

a plurality of audio prompts output by a speaker enclosed within the toy housing, a prompt including a question or instruction having at least one correct response, the question or instruction designed to encourage a child to make a cognitive selection of a number and indicate the cognitive selection of the number by causing contact with a touch-sensitive surface, the touch-sensitive surface formed on at least a portion of a substantially planar surface of the toy housing;

one or more sensors capable of sensing the location of where the touch-sensitive surface has been contacted;

a contact capable of occurring and being sensed in arbitrary child-defined locations on the touch-sensitive surface, the occurrence of contact on the touch-sensitive surface in response to the question or instruction indicating the cognitive selection by the child of the number corresponding to the question or instruction;

a processor enclosed within the toy housing capable of: a) executing educational software, b) receiving information from the one or more sensors corresponding to the occurrence of contact by the child on the touch-sensitive surface and, c) using the information from the sensors to determine whether the child's cognitive selection of the number as indicated by the occurrence of contact by the child on the touch-sensitive surface corresponds to a correct response to the question or instruction;

a first audio feedback response output by the speaker enclosed within the toy housing, the first audio feedback response indicating that the number selected by the child corresponds to a correct response to the question or instruction; and

a second audio feedback response output by the speaker enclosed within the toy housing, the second audio feedback response indicating that the selection by the child is something other than a correct response to the question or instruction,

the toy housing enclosing the speaker, at least a portion of the one or more sensors and the processor, the housing having a substantially planar surface, at least a portion of which comprises the touch-sensitive surface.

23. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 22, wherein the child causes contact with the touch-sensitive surface by placing an object on the touch-sensitive surface.

24. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 22, wherein the processor generates questions or instructions with different levels of difficulty.

25. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 24, wherein the processor generates more difficult questions depending on the user having provided correct previous answers.

26. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 22, further comprising a second prompt for a correct response to the question or instruction in the event the number selected by the child does not correspond to a correct response to the question or instruction.

27. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 22, further comprising a plurality of images on the touch-sensitive surface to facilitate the interaction between the educational software and the child, wherein the plurality of images on the touch-sensitive surface can be changed.

28. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 22, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being loaded into the toy by users thereof.

29. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 28, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being loaded via a portable memory capable of being inserted by the user into a portable memory receiving device associated with the toy.

30. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 28, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being downloaded from a remote location over a data transmission medium.

31. (New) An electronic educational toy having a housing for teaching numerical operations, comprising:

a plurality of audio prompts output by a speaker enclosed within the toy housing, a prompt including a question or instruction having at least one correct response, the question or instruction designed to encourage a child to make a cognitive selection of a numerical operation and indicate the cognitive selection of the numerical operation by causing contact with a touch-sensitive surface, the touch-sensitive surface formed on at least a portion of a substantially planar surface of the toy housing;

one or more sensors capable of sensing the location of where the touch-sensitive surface has been contacted;

a contact capable of occurring and being sensed in arbitrary child-defined locations on the touch-sensitive surface, the occurrence of contact on the touch-sensitive surface in response to the question or instruction indicating the cognitive selection by the child of the numerical operation corresponding to the question or instruction;

a processor enclosed within the toy housing capable of: a) executing educational software, b) receiving information from the one or more sensors corresponding to the occurrence of contact by the child on the touch-sensitive surface and, c) using the information from the sensors to determine whether the child's cognitive selection of the numerical operation as indicated by the occurrence of contact by the child on the touch-sensitive surface corresponds to a correct response to the question or instruction;

a first audio feedback response output by the speaker enclosed within the toy housing, the first audio feedback response indicating that the numerical operation selected by the child corresponds to a correct response to the question or instruction; and

a second audio feedback response output by the speaker enclosed within the toy housing, the second audio feedback response indicating that the selection by the child is something other than a correct response to the question or instruction,

the toy housing enclosing the speaker, at least a portion of the one or more sensors and the processor, the housing having a substantially planar surface, at least a portion of which comprises the touch-sensitive surface.

32. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 31, wherein the child causes contact with the touch-sensitive surface by placing an object on the touch-sensitive surface.

33. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 31, wherein the processor generates questions or instructions with different levels of difficulty.

34. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 33, wherein the processor generates more difficult questions depending on the user having provided correct previous answers.

35. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 33, further comprising a second prompt for a correct response to the question or instruction in the event the numerical operation selected by the child does not correspond to a correct response to the question or instruction.

36. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 31, further comprising a plurality of images on the touch-sensitive surface to facilitate the interaction between the educational software and the child, wherein the plurality of images on the touch-sensitive surface can be changed.

37. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 31, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being loaded into the toy by users thereof.

38. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 37, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being loaded via a portable memory capable of being inserted by the user into a portable memory receiving device associated with the toy.

39. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 37, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being downloaded from a remote location over a data transmission medium.